

Servant Leadership's Values and Staff's Commitment: Policy Implementation Focus

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Abstract

Leadership and commitment issues are points of reference to public policy implementation in public organizations and always warrant the attention of governments around the globe. Success of formulated public policy and its implementation by the agency or organization in charge solely depends on the leader's characteristic attributes and commitment of the followers. Given that research about servant leadership attributes (SLA) and its constructs are still at an early stage of development in the literature, the study sets a platform to provide the basic framework on the level of perception about servant leadership attributes possessed by leaders in a public workplace and tries to link this leadership style to organizational commitment of the staff and how they affect public policy implementation in a resource-rich economy such as Malaysia. While many other leadership styles have been empirically tested against organizational commitment of staff (OCS), it is hard to see much work testing the servant leadership's values influence on OCS. Among the few works found in the literature is the work of Gilbert (2006) on "Servant Leadership and Follower Commitment". Here, however, servant leadership was used as moderator rather than its direct influence on organizational commitment of staff. Such gap needs to be filled up. Therefore, this study bridges the gap to complement Gilbert's study and finds SLA's direct relationship with OCS as well as the extent to which it can influence OCS. In other words, the study attempts to address threefold significant objectives (a) it identifies the commitment level given by the public servants towards the organization, which is assumed to be the behavioural outcomes of the way the leaders handled their followers in the organization for implementing policy (b) It also identifies the level of SLA possessed by the leaders from the perception of the followers and (c) finally, given that past

researchers have generalized the significant influence of all leadership attributes on organizational commitment of staff, this study specifically identifies the most servant leader's value that influences the commitment of the staff towards the organization thereby facilitating the success of the policies being implemented in public sector. According to the findings of the study, a positive relationship exists between SLA and OCS and the main influential value of servant leadership on OCS is the level of integrity possessed by leaders in the organization. This suggests, among all other characteristic attributes, the hierarchical importance of integrity quality of leaders that can significantly bring public policy implementation to success as compared to other attributes of servant leadership.

Keywords: Attribute, serving; leadership, public, policy implementation, Issues, commitment, organization

Introduction

During the early decades of independence, the public sector in Malaysia was regarded as the primary engine of growth which had played a dominant role in leading socioeconomic development and nation building. Yet, in the aspirations to achieve the Vision 2020, a primary role of the public sector is to provide the needed leadership style in promoting such strategic ideas towards achieving the objectives envisioned. The Malaysian public services are constantly seeking new and innovative ways to transform themselves to ensure that they remain relevant, add value to the economy of the country and make a difference through an innovate value for all of its stakeholders and the people at large. The government, being aware of this fact, has implemented various policy measures in its efforts to develop and enhance the leadership capability in the public sector. In this respect, some public sectors have started to experiment with and develop innovative policy structures and processes that could promote good leadership at the national, state and local level, and which would enhance and build strong commitment of the civil servants to their respective public organizations or agencies they are attached to. Critically speaking, however, we have to ask whether the idea of leadership role in any organization might not be better than the idea of leaders in the public organizations portraying themselves as servants to the people and organizations they are leading. That is, a shift from the controlling and ruling pattern of leadership to nurturing and/or a paternalistic boss in public owned organizations. It is our firm belief that leaders treating and portraying themselves as serving the needs of their immediate employees, followers, citizens and the organization at large are, in effect, more respected and valued by the society. Serving people's societal needs creates the image of being slavish or subservient. This is not a very positive image in the eyes of many, but in reality it is the primary contractual agreement between a leader and the led organization that he/she aims to serve or provide his service to.

It makes sense to propose that leaders should consider the needs of the stakeholders in the organization and serve and/or respond to their needs as expected. Hence, the term *servant leader*, designating a pattern of leadership in organizations, is a crucial public policy issue that is meant to shift the metaphors from '*leaders-as-autocrats, rulers, power-oriented to leaders-as-servants*'. That is, going from one extreme to the other depending on the types and category of organizations, such as the public ones, where it is being implemented. There is a need to make a demarcation and remark that neither end of the spectrum in any given organization, be it private or public, is very revealing about how a servant leader in organizations should function to reflect the commitments of those being led. However, we believe that when a leader effectively discharges his roles as expected with eloquent attributes of a servant leader which are central to serving the needs of the people, it will lead to the organization commitment of those being led. The leader who serves the needs of the staff will develop their desires to bring out the best in them and this will in turn build a sense of community, affective attachment and belonging to public agency or the organization they are serving.

It is a known fact that leadership is not a property of the individual, but a complex relationship between the characteristics of the leader and the attitudes and needs of the followers to realize the purpose of the organization (see: McGregor, 1960). According to Barbuto and Wheeler (2002, 2006), servant leadership is one of the most popularly discussed in the literature, but the least critically examined leadership philosophies in most of the public organizations. However, today researches are evolving in this area as many key organizations are implementing servant leadership in practice to get the commitment of their staff that could pave way for optimum success of the goals in policy implementation. As such, this study begins with exploring the servant leadership in the literature to identify the gap and make an attempt to fill it up within the context of Malaysian public sector. It examines the level of SLA possessed by the leaders and the staff's level of commitment to the organization. The study further examines the nature of relationship of SLA and its overall impact on, organizational commitment of the staff and how the outcome of such relationship affects policy implementation in public sector.

Methodologically the study employs a quantitative approach beginning with tests of various required assumptions, goodness of data and devises a model equation to predict the impact of SLA on OCS. It analyzes the findings with various implications for policy makers and suggests some valuable recommendations for new policy directions towards the enhancement of leadership problems in public organizations and staff's commitment with respect to public policy implementation issues in society.

Brief Literature Review

The Origin and Development of Servant Leadership

The term 'servant' indicates an idea based on service or serving. The idea of servant leadership is deeply rooted in and originated from religion. Ancient scripture refers to the servant leader example of Jesus Christ. For example, Matthew recorded Jesus' words: "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant" (Matthew 20:25-26, New International Version). Nouwen (1989) highlights the foundations of Jesus' leadership style from a study of the Gospels, where "Power is constantly abandoned in favor of love" (p. 63). In the Epistles, the Apostle Paul suggests that anyone who wishes to follow in Jesus' steps would humble himself and take on "the nature of servant" (Phil 2:7).

In other religions such as Islam, the two primary roles of a leader in Islam are those of servant-leader and guardian-leader (see: Beekun and Badawi, 1999, p.2). In this connection, servant leader signifies that the leader is the servant of his followers (*sayyid al qawn khadimuhum*). He is to seek their welfare and guide them towards good deeds. The idea of a leader as a servant has been part of Islam since its beginning (Beekun and Badawi, 1999). As pointed out clearly by Prophet Muhammad (saw) in one of the Ahadiths, "*Every one of you is a shepherd and everyone is responsible for what he is shepherd of*" (Sahi Bukhari and Muslim, 3:733). Thus the idea of servant leaders is not a new one in religion. It was a motion known and accepted by all prophets of God. They were given commands which they obeyed to serve God directly and through their followers. In addition, the reference of Christ washing the feet of his disciples in the bible presents the servant leader scenario.

Although servant leadership seems to be prophetic in nature the western organizations have only realized it recently. Zohar (1997) connects Greenleaf's value-laden leadership ideas (coined by Robert K.Greenleaf (Spears, 1996, p. 33) with ancient Eastern religions that tend to be centered on values like compassion, humility, gratitude and service. This is best affirmed in Greenleaf (1997) classic statement: "The servant leader is servant first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead" (p.27). Servant leadership shares components of ideology that are part of many other current leadership theories. Although Greenleaf did not originate the concept of servant leadership, he did coin the term (Beazley and Beggs, 2002, p.56). Leadership researchers and writers such as Bass (2000),

Blanchard (2002), Collins (2001), Covey (2002), DePree (1995), Northouse (2001), and Senge (1990, 1997), have either anecdotally or prophetically referenced the idea that servant leadership should be considered by the leaders of today's organizations. Buchen (1998), Senge (1990), Jaworski, (1996), have specifically recommended servant leadership as a way to counterbalance ego and redirect power in a pro-social manner (Sashkin & Sashkin, 2003), for serving and developing others (Greenleaf, 1970; Stone, Russell, & Patterson, 2003), and for the good of the organizations of all kinds (Beazley, 2002; Melrose, 1995).

Conceptualizing Servant Leadership as Compared to Just Leadership

Studies on leadership had begun since the days of Greek philosophers and it was one of the most popular research topics in organizational behavior. Leadership itself is defined as a process whereby an individual influences others to achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2001). This basic definition of leaders allows for the collaborative nature of servant leadership in the context of leadership and has been supported in many empirical studies. In this paper, a servant leader could be defined as a leader whose primary purpose for leading is to serve others by investing in their development and well being for the benefit of accomplishing tasks and goals for the common good.

Being just a service-oriented person, in the traditional notion of servant hood, does not qualify one as a servant leader. Arlene Hall (1991) has observed "Doing menial chores does not necessarily indicate a servant leader [but instead], a servant leader is one who invests himself or herself in enabling others, in helping them be and do their best" (p. 14). In addition, servant-leadership should not be equated with self-serving motives to please people or to satisfy one's need for acceptance and assuming a position. At the very heart of servant-leadership is the genuine desire to serve others for the common good of the organization. In servant-leadership, focus on the goodness of others gives way to collective human development. Leadership is a relationship which reflects in a set of attributes or traits which can be seen in servant leaders. Mullins (2005:316) explains that leadership is essentially the relationship through which one person influences the behavior or actions of other people. In addition, Hellriegel and Slocum (2004:250) are of the opinion that "leadership is the process of developing ideas and a vision, living by values that support those ideas and that vision, influencing others to embrace them in their own behaviors, and making hard decisions about human and other resources". In other words leaders must create vision and develop strategies, engage, motivate and inspire people, build trust and have courage.

In an organization it is a necessity to have a leader who is leading with humility, listening, empathy, awareness, foresight and commitment on building community which characterized a servant leadership style. With such characteristic behaviour, leaders are felt to be effective because the needs of followers or employees are so looked after for them to reach their full potential, hence perform at their best. The strength of this way of looking at leadership is that it forces leaders in organizations away from self-serving, domineering leadership and makes those in charge think harder about how to respect, to value and motivate people reporting to them in the organization. Thus, servant leadership incorporates the ideals of empowerment, total quality, team building, and participatory management, and the service ethics into a leadership philosophy.

In the words of the Greenleaf Center for Servant-Leadership (1997), "this model of leadership emphasizes increased service to others; a holistic approach to work; promoting a sense of community; and the sharing of power in decision making" (p.4). Servant-leaders have to be value-and character-driven people whose behaviours reflect a sense of serving hood. Servant leadership is an attitudinal behaviour toward the responsibilities of leadership as much as it is a style of leadership. Furthermore, the concept is most often presented and understood in juxtaposition to autocratic or hierarchical styles of leadership. It seems that servant-leadership takes into account that traditional forms of leadership are inadequate for motivating today's people in organizationally diverse and culturally different settings to follow. Although, in today's thinking about effective and productive organizations, we can reorganize, restructure, or reengineer our organization to be more effective but it will not be successful for very

long, unless change is first built on the preeminence of human resources management by leaders in public led organizations. People and process will always be more important tasks in themselves and reduce power distance in organizational structure for accomplishing goals and optimum productivity.

In servant leadership, it is believed that effective systems and processes are only effective if the people who make them are effective. This, in effect, no doubt, lies in the hands of leaders and followers in the organization. Highly motivated and well-trained leader with servant leader's trait-qualities is the only assurance that any organization will be effective in accomplishing its goals. Therefore, servant-leaders motivate followers through investing in them and empowering, coaching and mentoring them to do their best. Although it can be argued that the aforementioned qualities identified in epistemological definition in servant leadership are equally shared by some other leadership styles, however, in the normal running of people and organization's affairs, the overall pattern of attributes of the servant-leader stands in stark contrast to command-and-control leadership.

What Characterizes a Servant Leader?

Servant leaders seek to help people gain and realize their potentials through teaching and coaching them to do their best. They listen to their people, praise them, support them, and redirect them when they deviate from their goals. They find out what their people need to be successful. Greenleaf (1977) believed that the focus of a servant leader needed to be developing other autonomous servant leaders who follow their own conscience rather than the leader's conscience, so that society would benefit. Rather than focusing on self-interest or what will please their egos, servant leaders are interested in making a difference in the lives of their people and impacting the organization for the better. They are 'humble' people who don't think less of the others but just think about themselves less. They don't deny their power but just realize that it passes through them and not from them.

The idea that leaders and managers must serve their people if they are to create highly successful organizations is not new. Blanchard (2004), a high profile supporter of the servant leadership concept, explains why leading with humility could be the key to surviving and thriving during the current economic crisis. If we want to survive and thrive during this crisis, we need to first make sure we are a servant leader (Blanchard, 2004). Therefore, if servant leadership is practiced in the upper levels of an organization, it should impact the managers' and supervisors' behaviors in various work units and have the ability to be replicated across the organization.

In the servant leadership literature emphases to discover perceptions from all levels of employees have been made. This is to see how servant leadership practices across the whole organization influence various work units of the organization. Servant leadership has a unique and significant contribution to organization of all kinds. Servant leadership has been specifically recommended for some challenging areas in the study and practice of leadership. For example, Buchen (1998), Senge (1990) and Jaworski, (1996) suggest servant leadership will produce a shared leadership that counterbalances ego and power in the positional leader. In addition, Laub (1999) and Stone et al (2003) believe developing followers for their personal growth first and fostering their commitments will benefit the organization in totality.

Organization Commitment of Staff (OCS)

Commitment has been explained in diverse ways, reflecting the lack of consensus among the scholars about the meaning of the term (Mowdays et al., 1982). This has led to a difficulty in understanding the epistemological underpinning of the concept. To some, commitment is loyalty to a social unit which may be an organization or subsystem of an organization and even an occupation (Price, 1997). Generally, organization commitment is conceptualized as willingness to devote maximum amount of efforts to the success of the organization. In relations to employees and followers of organization it also entails a positive recognition and identification of the organization values and seeking to maintain affiliation with the organization (Kanter, 1968).

Organizational commitment covers a wide range of behavioural issues related to feelings, attitudes, values, practices, and brilliant ideas willingly and voluntarily coming from the employees to buttress the interest of the organization they belong to. It equally reflects the degree of attachment and dedication of the staff to the organization (Awamleh, 1996). In the context of behavioural intention, staff has high degree of continuing with and actively involved in actualizing the objectives and goals of the organization at all situations (Newstrom and Davis 1993). Thus organizational commitment of employees is his/her loyalty to the organization. Generally, Luthans (2005) found that organizational commitment is “(1) a strong desire to remain a member of a particular organization; (2) a willingness to exert high levels of effort on behalf of the organization; and (3) a definite belief in, and acceptance of, the values and goals of the organization” (217). In other words, commitment is an attitude of expressing employee's concern, continuance growth and the success of the organization.

From such understanding, organizational commitment typically has to do with staff's psychological bond to the organization and a sense of job involvement and loyalty. Thus commitments of staff mobilize them for the development of the organizational goals and purpose. This is evident in the words of Donnelly and Konopaske (2006) where organizational commitment is seen “as the extent to which an individual identifies with an organization, is committed to its goals, their level of involvement within the organization and wishes to maintain membership in the organization” (p.184). In the same line of understanding, Swanepoel et al (2003) sought employee commitment to an organization's success to be largely depended on the employee's perception of the extent to which their own needs and personal objectives of working with the organization are fulfilled. Hence, one might be rightly correct to view commitment to organization as a work-related attitude (see: Robbins, 2005:79, Luthans 2005:217 and Ivancevich, Konopaske, and Matteson 2005:224).

Employees who are committed to their organization exhibit the most positive work attitudes and work performance. They have strong intention to remain with the organization (Somers and Birnbaum, 2000). According to Nelson and Quick (2005), “job satisfaction and organizational commitment are two important work attitudes that are strongly related” (p.87). Thus, increasing job satisfaction in an organization is likely to increase commitment as well. As has been explicitly shown in the work of Nelson and Quick (2004; 2005) work attitudes are important, as they influence organizational success (see: p.88). It has become clear that organizational commitment has some important implications for employees and organizations through various studies conducted by researchers. Empirical results of many of these works have shown that the negative effects such as absenteeism, turnover intention always associate with lack of employees' commitment to the organization to which they belong (Bennet and Durkin 2000).

According to Meyer and Allen (1997), organizational commitment is embedded with three components, namely affective, normative and continuance commitment. First, affective commitment embraces the psychological and emotional attachment of staff to the organization. This reflects in terms of identification of the staff with the organization and his/her level of involvement in all organizational activities. Those who feel they have more access to training are more likely to exhibit higher feelings of affective commitment (Kamarul and Raida, 2003). Second, normative commitment denotes a perceived obligation to remain or stay with the organization by the staff (Meyer and Allen, 1988). According to Mathieu and Zajac (1990) normative commitment of staff is a signal of loyalty attitude towards the organization. Greenleaf (1997) clarified that servant leadership is founded upon a new moral principle that the only authority deserving one's loyalty is that which is freely and knowingly granted by the follower to the leader in response and proportion to the servanthood of the leader. Thus, normative commitment of the staff is based on feelings of moral obligations towards responsibility and the organization. Basically, it reflects a sense of obligation on the part of the employee to maintain membership in the organization (Kamarul and Raida, 2003). Third, continuance commitment captures the cost associated with leaving the organization by the staff, which can be envisaged via loss of benefits or seniority (Kamarul and Raida, 2003). Thus, an employee or staff makes a pragmatic assessment of how failure to remain with the organization would incur costs for him or her (Meyer and

Allen, 1988). Thus, an individual will stay with the organization in lieu of fear of losing the potential benefits that might not be found elsewhere (Kamarul and Raida, 2003).

Common to the three components of commitment is a psychological state that characterizes the staff's relationship with the organization and has a big implication on the decision to continue or discontinue with the organization (see: Chen and Francesco, 2003). However, the nature of psychological state for each component of commitment is quite different. Empirical results of many research outputs have shown that staff with strong affective commitment tends to remain with the organization because he/she likes it, while the staff with strong continuance commitment remains because of his/her needs and staff with strong normative commitment stays because he/she feels obliged to do so (Mayer and Allen, 1997).

Relationship between Servant Leadership and Organizational Commitment of Staff

Theoretically and empirically, organizational commitment appears to be likely impacted by servant leaders. For example, Agarwal et al (1999) found one of the strong components of servant leadership characteristic attributes such as *consideration* behavior to be positively correlated with organizational commitment and involvement of employees in the organizational activities. It shouldn't come as a surprise because consideration behaviour of a servant leader allows him/her to see rank or leadership position in organization as nothing but responsibilities. Hence holding a position should not mean an authority or command but carrying out ones responsibilities. As such Drucker (1999) believes organizations are now evolving toward structures in which rank entails responsibility but not authority, and where the supervisor's job is not to command, but to persuade. Therefore, for an organization to be effective it is critical for leaders to influence their subordinates and peers. Leaders should assist and support their growth, needs, and motivate them to carry out their duties to the fullest expectation of the organization (see: Bickle, 2003).

In a recent survey conducted by the Asian organization, the results show that many employees have different expectations of the workplace and their managers. Here, the employees were asked to think about the best team leader or manager they had worked for, and what has made them such good managers. Overwhelmingly, the majority of the employees said that what made them the best team leaders or managers was the ability to listen to staff, which is one of the potential attributes of a servant leader. This was closely followed by managers who treat all people with respect and as equals, and do not regard themselves as "superior" to the people in the organization who they were responsible to manage.

Thus, the characteristic traits of servant leadership will extensively associate with organizational commitments of the employees. Failing to practice and to build servant leadership will affect the efficiency and effectiveness of the service to the public service and their commitment towards the government organization. In addition, the perceived support of the leaders was found to correlate positively with employee's affective commitment to the organization (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison and Sowa, 1986). Thus, it is beyond a reasonable doubt that a strong positive relationship will exist between organizational commitment of the staff and work outcomes such as performance, adaptability, and job satisfaction (eg. Mowday et al., 1974; Porter et al., 1974; Angle and Perry, 1981; Steers, 1977; Hunt, 1991; Wong, Hui and Law 1995; Benkoff, 1997; William, 1996). Mathieu and Zajac (1990) conducted a meta-analysis of work related in organization and found that personal characteristics or traits of leader and group-leader relations enhance organizational commitment of staff.

As has been widely discussed that leaders are agents of change, their acts profoundly affect other staff more than how the staff's acts affect them. As such Robbins (2001) lamented that "leadership plays a central part in understanding group behavior, for it's the leader who usually provides the direction toward goal attainment" (340) by demonstrating some excellent characters to followers. Hence servant leaders should "adapt their style to fit the organizational and cultural context

in which they operate” (Buchanan and Huczynski 2004:747). In the words of Hellriegel and Slocum (2004) “organizational effectiveness and success are greatly influenced by the quality of its leadership [and] today’s leadership should be able to mobilize ideas and values that energize other people” (p. 250). Greenleaf (1977) suggests that servant leadership produces organizational commitment because it builds or creates a trusting, supportive community that fosters creativity and initiative. This conceptualization suggests that when a leader displays such characteristic traits the individual staff form bonds with him/her as well as the organization to a certain degree where the staff self-conceptions are engaged in the jobs they perform and the organization at large.

Public Policy Implementation Issues in Leadership-Staff's Commitment Relation

The consequences of low commitment or quality of work of civil servants towards implementation of public policy affect the service delivery to the public. In most of the countries around the world, it is a common complaint that civil servants are no more loyal as they used to be in the past. Likewise, in private organization settings, employees would tend to leave their companies for slightly better pay due to low commitment. According to Nijhof et al (1998), the achievement or success of an organization in implementing its policies does not only rely on how the organization utilizes its human capitals and competencies but also on how it incites commitment to them in favour of the organization. Hence, the biggest challenge for public organizations is to provoke a sense of commitment in the civil servants and goes about instilling loyalty in them. Failure often occurs in the implemented public policies not because the policy goals have not been well-defined but due to leadership style of the leaders executing the policies and the lack of commitments of the Staff. Government officers and staff with sense of commitment are less likely to engage in withdrawal behaviour and more willing to accept change and even emotionally attached to the organization (Iverson and Buttigieg, 1998).

Meanwhile, the value, characteristic which should entail the roles of the leaders in implementing public policies are some inherent attributes embedded in servant leadership. They are needed to be possessed by the management officers of the Public led-organizations. This is to ensure they adapt servant leadership as common practice in the implementation and execution of public policies. An extensive emphasis is needed about organizational commitment of civil servants in the public sector (Rowden, 2000; Kontoghiorphes and Bryan, 2004). Much of the interest in commitment of both leaders and staff in policy execution can be seen from a positive relationship between policy officer's behavior and desirable work outcomes of the policy implemented. Hence, the aspect of organizational commitment of the staff is even more important since it is considered as the driving force behind the performance of the implemented public policy and the realization of its objectives (Kamarul and Raida, 2003).

It is argued that staff's interest in commitment have been sparked by its potential benefits manifest in the achievement of policy goals (Somers and Birnbaum, 2000). It is also an important variable in explaining work-related behavior and its impact on performance in all given organizations irrespective of their kinds (Benkoff, 1997). It has been reported that the perceived support, which often characterize a servant leader has been found positively correlate with staff's affective commitment to the organization (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison and Sowa, 1986). In addition, a study conducted by Meyer and Allen (1988) indicated that normative commitment has strong and positive correlation with support from the leaders in the organization. However, according to Meyer and Allen (1988) a weak and negative correlation exists between support and continuance commitment of staff to the organization. On the basis of solid and well-established relationships between servant leadership and organizational commitment of staff as shown in the literature reviewed, the following hypotheses are posited.

Hypotheses

- H1: Servant leadership attributes (SLA) are positively related to Staff's commitment towards the organization's policy implementation.
- H2: *Integrity attribute of a servant leadership will positively and dominantly influence the organizational commitment of the Staff (OCS) towards policy implementation.*

Methodology and Approach to the Study

The Design and Source of Data

The study covered the civil servants at various departments in the Public Service Department (PSD). It employs a cross-sectional survey to obtain information from the informants. In order to enrich the study with adequate and appropriate evaluation of the servant leadership attributes possessed by the leaders, the informants were chosen from the support followers of the leaders themselves as our unit of analysis. Public Service Department (PSD) is a Government Department under the Prime Minister auspices. The PSD was established in 1934 and was then known as the Malayan Establishment Office (MEO). In 1954 the functions of MEO and the Establishment Division of the Federal Treasury was merged and renamed as The Federal Establishment Office. On the 15th August 1968, this office was renamed again as the PSD. Currently, there are around 3033 number of personnel comprising management and professional groups as many as 843 with 2190 supporting staff. Among other things, the PSD plays vibrant and strategic roles in public policy formulation process on various matters related to citizens and social affairs of the society at large.

This study is a field survey using self administered questionnaires distributed to the informants on the various dimensions of servant leadership characteristic attributes as well as on the commitments of the informants to their departments and the organization as a whole. Since sampling is the process of selecting sufficient number of elements from the population to represent the properties or characteristics that made it possible to generalize the findings, a sample size of 204 employees (staff) was purposively and conveniently chosen to participate in the study over a period of two months, between July-August, 2010. Hence, our unit of analysis is individual civil servants asked to rate the characteristic attributes of their immediate leader in each selected Department of PSD.

Instrumentation and Measurement

The research utilizes a survey questionnaire developed to measure the independent variable referred to as the main servant leadership attributes as well as the dependent variable referred to as the organization commitment of the civil servants. The literature regarding servant leadership reveals many distinguishable attributes of such leaders. These include: *integrity* which in this study covers different dimensions such as transparency, honesty, trustworthiness, authenticity, and faithfulness. *Humility* attribute has been measured with dimensions correctly ascertaining leader's place in life and leader's value in relation to staff. Hence it focuses on obedience, acceptance, and modesty. *Empathy* attribute is measured with respect to how a leader is empathetic listeners who recognize others or staff for their special and unique qualities. The *foresight* attribute focuses on how leaders view the likely outcome of a given situation based on past lessons, realities of the present and consequences of the future that can affect organization and its staff. A servant leader must be diligent and such *diligence* attribute captures few dimensions related to timeliness and excellence in outcomes, which was measured in terms of work, innovation, excellence, initiative, and effective discharge of leader's responsibility. Finally, *building community* attribute focused on strong relationships, collaboration with others and how leaders value other's differences to accomplish the goals of the organization.

The survey instruments used for staff commitment towards the organization are of three level dimensions for commitment such as affective, normative and continuous commitment in line with

Meyer and Allen (1991). It was measured on a 1-5 point likert scales ranging from strongly disagree =1 to strongly agree = 5.

Goodness of Data

The goodness of data starts from consistency of the items with the concepts being measured in the survey. In other words, consistency indicates how well the items measuring a concept hang together as a set for any constructs and must be tested. Internal consistency and reliability of the survey instrument used was tested via Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha is computed in terms of the average inter-correlations among the items measuring the concepts. We have used the Cronbach's Alpha to examine and identify the reliability and internal consistency of the survey instruments used in the study. Table 1 shows the result of Reliability Statistic Test with the average value of Cronbach's Alpha for components of each construct in independent and dependent variables. The results show that the survey instruments are reliable with the Cronbach's Alpha value ranging from 0.76 to 0.91 approximately. Thus, the results indicate the goodness of the items in the survey and their appropriateness (De Vaus, 2006, Ambali, 2008). The Cronbach's alpha value exceeded the 0.7 standard proposed by Nunnaly (1978). The acceptable reliability coefficient values is categorized ranging from 0.6 acceptable to excellent (> 0.7) according to George and Mallery (2001) and hence the survey instrument is found to be adequate and well reliable in this study as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Reliability and Internal Consistency of Survey Instrument

| <i>Variable</i> | <i>Cronbach's Alpha</i> | <i>N of Items</i> |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Integrity | 0.889 | 5 |
| Humility | 0.906 | 6 |
| Empathy | 0.796 | 5 |
| Foresight | 0.771 | 7 |
| Diligence | 0.762 | 6 |
| Building Community | 0.839 | 7 |
| Organizational Commitment of Staff | 0.806 | 10 |

Statistical Approach and Assumptions Satisfied

At the inception of the OLS (ordinary least square) approach to this work, various assumptions such as normality of the data distribution, homoscedasticity and collinearity are examined and satisfied (see: Aiken and West, 1991, Aguinis, 2004 and Ambali, 2009). Normality test is a prerequisite for any inferential statistical technique. As argued by Coakes and Dzidic (2006), there are a number of ways to explore this assumption graphically by histogram, stem and leaf plot, box-plot, normal probability plot. There are also a number of statistical methods to test such assumption which includes Kolmogrove-Smirnov with Lillifors significance level and Shapiro-Wilk as well as Skewness and Kurtosis. Essentially, skewness and kurtosis are the two statistics used to summarize the shape of the distribution of the variables in this study. According to Hair et al (2006), the degree to which a distribution is asymmetrical is indicated by the skewness values whilst kurtosis meanwhile suggests the degree of flatness or peakness in data distribution relative to the shape of a normal distribution. Thus, Hair et al (2006) suggested that a normal distribution should occupy a range within an acceptable ± 2 . In this study, the results for all items are well below such value ± 2 and thus indicate normality of the data distribution. In addition, other indicators of normality of data distribution for using inferential statistics as in this study are the Kolmogrove-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk with p-value > 0.05 (see Table 2)

Table 2: Test of normality distribution of data for the variables

| Variables | Skewness | Kurtosis | Kolmogorov-Smimov (a) (Sig) | Assumptions on distribution |
|-------------------------|----------|----------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Integrity | 0.030 | -0.236 | 0.200 | Normal |
| Humility | 0.172 | 0.206 | 0.200 | Normal |
| Empathy | 0.214 | 0.161 | 0.200 | Normal |
| Foresight | 0.246 | 0.380 | 0.200 | Normal |
| Diligence | 0.026 | -0.029 | 0.200 | Normal |
| Building community | -0.090 | -0.107 | 0.200 | Normal |
| Organization Commitment | -0.124 | -0.190 | 0.200 | Normal |

Furthermore, the multicollinearity assumption is examined through a partial correlation statistics between variables. The result in Table 3 shows an absence of colinearity among all independent variables. In fact lower values of correlation (r) (Mallery, 2001) among independent variable, which range from 0.2 to 0.4, as well as tolerance values between 0.5 and 0.6, indicate absence of multicollinearity problem.

Table 3: Colinearity and multicollinearity assumptions

| Variable | Tolerance | Correlation (r) |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| Integrity | 0.620 | 0.419 |
| Humility | 0.623 | 0.449 |
| Empathy | 0.634 | 0.411 |
| Foresight | 0.571 | 0.312 |
| Diligence | 0.620 | 0.284 |
| Building Community | 0.677 | 0.226 |

Statistical procedure of realizing the various objectives in this study begins with the use of mean and standard deviation to assess the level of the perceived SLA possessed by leaders of the selected departments in the organization (independent variables) and as well as the level of the staff commitment to the organization as a whole. Then, the causal relation between the levels of the perceived SLA and organizational commitment of the staff was examined through OLS (Least Square) analysis. As such, a causal relation equation was derived as follows:

Estimated (OCS) = $\alpha + \beta_1 \text{ integrity} + \beta_2 \text{ humility} + \beta_3 \text{ empathy} + \beta_4 \text{ foresight} + \beta_5 \text{ diligence} + \beta_6 \text{ building community} + \epsilon$.

Where $\beta_1 - 6$ are the estimated coefficient values of the OCS and a constant α and term error ϵ . An entry method of regression analysis was used to see the overall effects of predictors, while controlling for all demographic variables.

Findings of the Study

With respect to the profile of respondents, table 4 shows the frequency and percentages of distribution for profile of the respondents. The female participants dominate in the study with 66.2 % distribution as compared to male counterpart 33.8%. The respondents mostly are Malays with the percentage of 95.1% and followed by Indians and Chinese with the percentage of 3.4 and 1.0 respectively. The other participants are with a minimal percentage of 0.5. Far majority of respondents are within the age category of 31 years old (55.4%) followed by those within the range of 40 of age (19.6%) and age above 50 years with 13.2% respectively. The majority of our respondents are SPM holders of academic qualification with the percentage of 63.2% and the remaining 27.9% comes from qualification of Diploma level or equivalent. Only about 7.8% of respondents have Bachelors or equivalent level and followed by SRP or equivalent level with the 1.0%. This shouldn't come as a surprise, since our

research focused on the support staff in (grade 1 to 40) in the organization. In terms of job category by grades, 68.1% of the respondents our respondents are grade 17 to 26 and followed by 23.5% with grade 27 to 40 while only 7.8% are within the grade 1 to 16. Most of the respondents (27.5%) had long experience of 10 years working with the organization followed by 24.5% with duration between 1 to 3 years. While about (9.8%) of the respondents had been working between 7 to 9 years, 19.6 % of them have worked between 4 to 6 years. However, 18.6% of the respondents have less than 1 year experience working with their department in the organization.

Table 4: Profile of Respondents

| Variable | | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Gender | Male | 69 | 33.8 |
| | Female | 135 | 66.2 |
| Ethnic | Malay | 194 | 95.1 |
| | Chinese | 2 | 1.0 |
| | Indian | 7 | 3.4 |
| | Others | 1 | 0.5 |
| Age | Less than 31 years old | 113 | 55.4 |
| | 31 - 40 years old | 40 | 19.6 |
| | 41 - 50 years old | 24 | 11.8 |
| | 50 years and above | 27 | 13.2 |
| Highest academic qualification | SRP or equivalent | 2 | 1.0 |
| | SPM or equivalent | 129 | 63.2 |
| | Diploma or equivalent | 57 | 27.9 |
| | Bachelors or equivalent | 16 | 7.8 |
| Job category | Grade 1 to 16 | 16 | 7.8 |
| | Grade 17 to 26 | 139 | 68.1 |
| | Grade 27 to 40 | 48 | 23.5 |
| Duration in present department | Less than 1 year | 38 | 18.6 |
| | Between 1 to 3 years | 50 | 24.5 |
| | Between 4 to 6 years | 40 | 19.6 |
| | Between 7 to 9 years | 20 | 9.8 |
| | More than 10 years | 56 | 27.5 |
| Duration in present position | Less than 1 year | 40 | 19.6 |
| | Between 1 to 3 years | 49 | 24.0 |
| | Between 4 to 6 years | 37 | 18.1 |
| | Between 7 to 9 years | 29 | 14.2 |
| | More than 10 years | 49 | 24.0 |

The next section presents the findings of the study in relation to the research objectives. As has been mentioned earlier, the Mean and Standard Deviation were used to identify the level of the perceived servant leadership attributes (SLA) possessed by the leaders in a public led organization, which are expected to influence the staff's commitment to the organization as a whole. Meanwhile, multiple-regression was used to assess the relationship between servant leadership attributes and the level of the staff's commitment to the organization's policy implementation at the Public Service Department (PSD).

Table 5: The level of follower's commitment to their organization and SLA

| | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---------------------------|-----|------|----------------|
| Integrity | 204 | 4.09 | .57 |
| Humility | 204 | 3.84 | .59 |
| Empathy | 204 | 3.82 | .62 |
| Foresight | 204 | 4.01 | .53 |
| Diligence | 204 | 4.03 | .55 |
| Building Community | 204 | 3.95 | .61 |
| Organizational commitment | 204 | 3.51 | .38 |

Table 5 shows the level of staff's commitment with the organization at Public Service Department. The mean is 3.51 (std. = 0.38), which indicates that most of the staff are highly committed to the departments and the organization at large. This high commitment of the staff might be due to the servant leadership attributes (SLA) possessed and practiced by the leaders at PSD. However this needs to be further investigated in the course of accomplishing the posited hypotheses of the study. As for the level of the perceived servant leader's attributes possessed by the leaders in the organization with respect to various Departments, the means ranges from 3.8 to 4 (Table 5) on an interval scale of 1-5. The results show that a high level of the said attributes has been demonstrated by the leaders in each Department of the organization.

Correlation between SLA and OCS

H1: *Servant leadership attributes (SLA) are positively related to Staff's commitment towards the organization's policy implementation.*

As shown in Table 6, the results of correlation coefficient analysis carried in this study indicate a positive relationship between individual components of servant leadership attributes and the organizational commitment of the staffs at PSD towards policy implementation efforts of the organization. The results also prove a moderate relationship between SLA and OCS. In other words, it can be inferred that the more a leader correctly demonstrates each attribute of servanthood leadership qualities or values to the followers, the better the commitment of the staff towards the organization's activities and programs embarked upon. This is confined to organization's policy implementation programs but also its entire efforts towards actualization of the mission and vision.

Table 6: Correlation coefficient of SLA and OCS

| SLA ATTRIBUTES & OCS | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|----------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---|
| 1. Integrity | 1 | | | | | | |
| 2. Humility | 0.519** | 1 | | | | | |
| 3. Empathy | 0.495** | 0.500** | 1 | | | | |
| 4. Foresight | 0.587** | 0.522** | 0.620** | 1 | | | |
| 5. Diligence | 0.312** | 0.226** | 0.347** | 0.389** | 1 | | |
| 6. Building community | 0.284** | 0.194** | 0.421** | 0.447** | 0.598** | 1 | |
| 7. Organization Commitment | 0.411** | 0.367** | 0.340** | 0.338** | 0.315** | 0.324** | 1 |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

The Impact of SLA and the Main Attribute Value that Influence OCS the Most

H2: *Servant leadership attributes have positive significant impact on organizational commitment of the staff.*

Table 7 shows the relationship between the organization commitment of staff towards policy implementation and the main servant leadership attributes at Public Services Department. To examine the nature of relationship and the magnitude of the impact of SLA on OCS, we infer the value of R^2 . R^2 value represents how much the servant leader's attributes have explained (or % impact) of the SLA on the level of commitment of the followers to the organization. As has been shown in Table 6, there is a positive relationship between followers' commitment to the organization and the servant leader's attributes demonstrated by the leaders with the R^2 value of 0.25. In other words, it indicates that 25% of the followers' commitment towards the organization's policy implementation is explained by the degree of SLA possessed by the leaders. However, from the various elements or attributes of SLA, integrity of the leader is the most significant contributor to the prediction of follower's commitment to the organization. Evidently, this can be inferred from the values of t-values and Beta-coefficients of each attribute. All in all, the integrity attribute is the most influential attribute of SLA that has injected

a high degree of the follower's commitment to the organization's policy implementation activities with t-value 2.893 and B=0.235 at a significant value of $p \leq 0.05$.

Table 7: The impact of SLA on OCS with main servant leadership attribute

| Variables | Standard Coefficient (B) | T | Sig. |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------|-------|
| Integrity Attribute | 0.235 | 2.893 | 0.004 |
| Humility Attribute | 0.185 | 2.369 | 0.019 |
| Empathy Attribute | 0.055 | 0.655 | 0.514 |
| Foresight Attribute | -0.040 | -0.434 | 0.665 |
| Diligence Attribute | 0.105 | 1.341 | 0.182 |
| Building Community Attribute | 0.153 | 1.865 | 0.064 |
| R ² | 0.25 | | |
| F | 11.090 | | |

Discussion of Findings and Implications for Policy-Makers

The primary objective of this study is to empirically examine the extent to which a leader in public organization who possessed some of the servant leadership attributes (SLA) can influence the organization commitment of the lower civil servants towards effective policy implementation. The results of Pearson product moment have shown a positive relationship between SLA and OCS as hypothesized in the study. This indicates that a leader in any given organization, especially the public ones, which are service oriented organizations, must place the goodness of those being led over the self-interest of him/her self. A leader with these attributes should be expected to value people, develop followers, build community, display authenticity, and/or integrity in a public led organization (Laub, 1999). The findings have shown that integrity attribute has been the main servant leadership quality that influences high commitment of the followers. This has in turn led to a high accountability and transparency in enhancing service delivery to the public. There is no doubt that when a leader demonstrates such high quality attributes and values the followers would be highly committed to the organization. Their willingness to devote personal efforts to the success of the organization, identification with the values of the organization, and seeking to maintain affiliation with the organization is very high (Kanter, 1968).

The implication for the policy makers here is that leaders in the public organizations should go to the next step and abandon self-interest by putting the interests of those they serve or the interest of the public generally above their personal interest in order to achieve the national policy objectives and goals. Many decades back, public organizations have been characterized and stigmatized with woeful performances and the issue has always been associated with leadership problems as compared to private organizations in the same industry. Since leadership attributes play a significant role in the performance of the followers in the organization, governments invest more on training policy especially for the young leaders of today in public organizations. They need to be retrained to possess those highly valued qualities of SLA to improve the poor performance of the public organizations around the world. Research by Becker, et al (1996) indicates that follower's commitment to organization is positively related to performance, where a leader in organization demonstrates the notion of serving the people, the immediate followers and the organization at large. In addition, Greenleaf (1972), Spears and Lawrence (2004) and Spears (2006) assert that servant leaders must believe in serving the interests of the people or organizations they are leading at all costs by sacrificing all they might possess in terms of skills, time, and knowledge.

Although the integrity attribute, as has been hypothesized in the study, emerged as the higher servant leadership attribute practiced at the Public Service Department, the whole attributes are essential qualities that staff desire to see in their leaders. The integrity attribute and quality of a servant leader relates to dignity possessed by a person's consistent alignment of motives and actions as well as the reality over time. This attribute is a crucial quality needed in public organizations as it captures the

nexus of transparency, honesty, trustworthiness, authenticity, and faithfulness and high accountability of a leader. Integrity attribute is important in this decade to promote the good governance of the public sector as a whole and the better public policy delivery to the public. As the central agency in public sector the leader at PSD should be seen as the role model to the other departments in terms of accountability and transparency that reflect good governance. According to the leadership literature, integrity is an essential value of good leaders (Russell, 2001) which is prominent in servant leadership for effective policy implementation (Smith et al., 2004). It is imperative for policy makers to lay emphasis on value of integrity as it becomes an essential value of building interpersonal and organizational trust as well as enhancing the image of the public organization in the eyes of the citizens.

With regards to the humility attribute of a servant leader, this characteristic quality of a leader in public led organization is best described as having the self-confidence borne of experience to be comfortable in one's own leadership skin. As has been widely argued, one cannot deny the truth that the *"path towards confident humility is considerably more difficult and is filled with its own opportunities for derailment"* (see: Petty, 2009). Thus, those that act humble may be misperceived as weak or uncertain about their leadership responsibilities. The humble leaders are never weak, in effect the humble and ethical use of power as a servant leader, cultivates a genuine relationship between leaders and followers and creates a supportive or positive work environment to move the organization up to the highest level. Like some martial arts experts, they have the skills to strike and defeat, but chose to use them only to defend or to fight for what is right and pursue their rights. Mostly, the civil servant in Public Services Department believe that the managements in PSD practice and make use of the humility attributes and accept opinion from junior officers. Leaders in public organizations should not be adamant to the views of the followers but be a good listener, have open-minds and pay attention to feedback before making decisions.

The implication to ponder here is that leaders with this attributes have high touch skills ranging from self-awareness, self-regulation, passion and motivation, to strong emotional intelligence and social skill, which can be used to motivate followers to strive and deliver the best services to the people. As such, humility attribute is a virtue and quality of leader that is against self-glorification but purports a leader with idea of serving others. The attribute also ensures that the followers feel free and easy to communicate with openness positive feedback and work together with their leaders and/or serve with full goodwill and friendliness. This in turn leads to followers giving their full commitment towards their organizations with sense of belongings.

As for the implication of quality of empathy in an organization, it helps leaders identify and understand the feelings, motives and situations of follower civil servants towards excellent approach of handling policy implementation. A leader in his/her capacity must recognize the concerns other people have, which likely to endanger the achievements of the organizational policy. For a leader to be emphatic is to always put him/herself in other people's shoes or 'seeing things through other person's eyes' especially, during the critical stage of policy implementation. It is useful to note that a leader in public owned organization that is consistently empathetic can easily forge positive connections with his fellow civil servants with spirit of collective efforts to better serve the general public. No doubt that the possession of empathy attribute by a leader would establish trust and build bonds among the entire members of the organization as well as create positive communities for the greater good. However, even if empathy attribute does not come naturally to some of our leaders, firmly we believe they have the capacity to develop and embed it in their behaviour.

Typically, the implication here again is that the empathy attributes reflect how followers feel about the degree by which their leaders give attention to their situations, motives and/or share their problems. In addition, the leaders should help the followers grow by sharing knowledge, experience, and expertise through a good rapport. When this attribute is demonstrated by leaders, the followers strive and work without hesitation as well as give their full commitments to achieve the organization's

mission of implementing the policy. They will put all efforts to ensure that the goals of the policy are achieved via a high level of their loyalty to the organization.

It is essential that a leader who is endowed with foresight attribute has the power and potential to transform the organization into a vibrant growing asset. The absence of this essential attribute in a leader indicates that the organization is devoid of the right tentacle to peep at the future events which can be endanger to the policy before it actually arrives. In other words, the policy implication here is that leaders with foresight gained an absorptive capacity that can be used to change the very basis of competition and thus charting a path for transforming the organization to better serve the citizens. The fact is that for leader to stay relevant and firm is first and foremost the biggest challenges that we face in the implementation of public policy today. The foresight possessed by a servant leader allows him/her to make a difference and clear goals for the organizational policy by putting the public first, adding value to the organization and always set examples to strive for success and innovation in the organization. Thus in implementing the policy for better service delivery a leader is always sensitive towards the changes that are happening around the globe. As a central agency responsible for human resource management and the public services, the foresight of the leader in this study is expected to constantly not only giving fast services but also meeting the needs of the general public.

Based on the findings, the knowledge, diligence and intelligence of a servant leader to enhance the progress of the organization are equally important traits or attributes in public sector. These attributes deal with and/or directly connected with issues of efficiency, cost-effectiveness of the organization, which must be inferred at the preliminary stage of policy formulation and implementation as well at every single stage of policy cycle. The implication is for policy-makers to recognize that a public led organization's leaders must not be chosen on the basis of patronage, paternalistic but rather on the basis of how knowledgeable, intelligent, specialty and competent they are. In addition, it must be based on the general area of humanities, social sciences and business administration other than political affiliations. It is simply because public led organization's leaders must have a good grasp of complex issues and the ability to get to the crux of the policy matters. Policy-makers should recognize that these attributes are affective traits in leaders that can impact other civil servants or followers to become very best employee with a sufficient know-how in carrying out their work professionally and efficiently. When the followers are well impacted with the attributes of a servant leader they will be willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected, thereby helping the organization to achieve its mission and vision. It is emphasized that leaders in public organizations should learn to possess the unique attributes of a servant leadership and should demonstrate them in developing and producing first class mentality followers and knowledge-workers towards zero error possible!

Smith et al (2004) found that servant leader would seem to focus on evolutionary change efforts within the framework of a more stable culture and community. The sense of building community is an important trait that leaders of public organization must possess. If the leader has the trait of community building he/she will always opt for assisting organizations in establishing, maintaining and improving policy programs designed to promote intellectual and social growth as well as responsibility, productivity and sustainability of the organization. The servant leader should use leading-edge thinking with practical application to enhance the capacity of followers to implement policy more effectively with a broad range of solving community issues. Each issue requires some sorts of decision-making process and implementation in the community area beyond the individual, the family or the business. In public led organizations, it is imperative that each unit leader, stakeholder implement and communicate effectively in addressing the policy issues that can jeopardize the ultimate goal of producing a better service to the public.

While leaders intimately attuned to the need and situation of the organization, the followers especially the unit managers must have commitment to involving and empowering others to be professionally and personally successful in discharging their duties. However, the commitment of the followers wouldn't happen in vacuum unless the leaders possess the trait that can facilitate and encourage the building of sense of community and teamwork upon the followers to enhance service

delivery system. Smith et al (2004) proposed that servant leaders create 'spiritual generative' culture that focuses on individual growth and dignity. These can be done through provision of opportunities, continues learning, sharing knowledge and learning program or career development for all workers to develop to their full potential that should precede policy implementation. To sum up a servant-leader is one who is committed to the growth of both the individual and the organization, and who works to build community within organizations. These types of leader are highly needed in public led-organizations today for effective policy implementation.

Recommendation for Organizations

The practices of servant leadership are in many ways applicable to the public service leaders as a whole. Its characteristic features are useful for leader as road model that can help tackle the complex situation and challenges of globalization and economic condition, which can jeopardize the progress of organizations. The possession of the attributes of servant leadership by public led organizations is paramount to management strategy planning for policy formulation, policy implementation in tandem with benchmarking and key performance indicator of the leaders. Therefore, attention needs to be paid to SLA not only to reorient positive ethical conducts into the mind of public leaders but also to ensure a progressive achievement in public assets. This is because leaders at different levels of the public organizations are regularly exposed to different conflicting interests between personal conscience and the organizational or societal interest at large.

Therefore, it is recommended that public leaders should be truly accountable and responsible toward their duties, the followers and the organizations. Leaders should often involve in hard work, lifelong endeavour and sacrifices for the organization to reflect their quality of serving and put their personal interest below the organizational interests. In addition, leaders that possess the true quality of servant leadership attributes should restraint from many temptations of power, wealth, and selfishness. They should strive for the growth of their followers; be just to the employees and the issues of one's dearest kin and associates must be avoided.

The possession of servant leadership attributes is recommended as urgent needs for leaders in public led organizations to deal with any policy issues related to the affairs of the lower civil servants. This manifests in curbing the widespread evil of abuse of power by the leaders, as servant leader prevents and reduces all kinds of problems directly related to command-and-control leadership. In addition, it is recommended that leaders in public organizations learn from the characteristic qualities of servant leadership in dealing with issues of restructuring, downsizing, merger and hostile take-over that strikes fear in the hearts of the followers whose jobs are directly affected. Often leaders simply shuffle workers around as pawns on a chess board without ever considering how these changes might impact their lives and performance. Thus, servant leaders can help navigate troubled waters and make inevitable changes less stressful for the lower civil servants in the public organizations and make them positively react to effective policy implementation measure that has been taken.

Evidence is accumulating that servant leadership is good for not only private or business but also public organizations. It is also recommended that public leaders should be retrained and made exposed to adopt as well as demonstrate the attributes of servant leadership to the followers to enhance the productivity of the organization. Romig (2001) has ascertained that thousands of employees have reported that when the practice of servant leadership was implemented through leadership training in a company, performance of the employees has improved by 15 - 20% and work group productivity by 20 -50%. This means an increase in profitability due to being led by a servant leader. Though, it must be pinpointed that no leader can be effective in a culturally diverse workplace by adopting only one leadership style, however the practices of servant leaders smoothening the achievement of the organizational policy goals easily.

The issues of transparency, accountability or integrity at the highest level cannot be attained merely by legal or technical means because many irresponsible and unethical acts are not in violation of civil law. In fact, in some societies, unethical practices by leaders or members of the society are even legalized. Based on theoretical and empirical analysis of this study, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that servant leader may indeed qualify as the best leadership style even in the unpleasant situation of having to fire civil servants or employees in any organization. Therefore the invaluable attributes of servant leadership becomes the only way to bring changes in the performance of the public led organizations.

Finally, in line with servant leadership practices leaders in public organizations should utilize their powers politely, develop a climate of trust and safety for their followers and lay down some ground rules for pursue new way of management. They should provide career counseling and coaching to help their followers develop better work attitudes. Both leaders and followers need to treat each other with respect and dignity as human beings; give each other honest feedback in a safe and trusting environment because without trust, it is difficult to work together. A leader practicing and demonstrating servant leadership attribute should bear in mind that in the event when there is the need for a drastic change of direction, which seriously affects the followers, it is important to inform and consult them first. All in all, leaders and followers need to put aside their ego and selfish agenda in order to implement policies for growth and success of the public organizations. Leaders must devote their full attention to developing followers in building the organization to the fullest capacity and have a positive view of civil servant workers as individuals who are capable of developing their full potentials and becoming leader by given a supportive and caring work environment. It is recommended that leaders must realize that they need to be concerned with individual needs and sensitive to individual differences in personality and strive to bring out the best in their followers. Regardless of what kinds of powers servant leaders employ in a particular situation, they are set apart by the following cluster of attributes such as having desire to serve and care for organization; must be committed to developing and empowering followers; must be willing to sacrifice self-interest and suffer for others and value the followers and organization above their own personal interests.

Recommendation for Future Research

Servant leadership is rooted in religion. Future research should be directed to perspective of religions on the area. It is good to have a few articles appearing in the literature addressing the servant leadership from religious base such as Christianity, Buddhism and Islam. We are yet to see any deeper article from Islamic perspective addressing this area in the leadership literatures. It is recommended that more researches should be focused on servant leadership from other religions not mentioned as well. Above all, we would recommend that perhaps the future study should focus on how or whether SLA could be best applied in specific types of organizational culture; if not across cross-cultural context utilizing some well-developed theories. It is interesting to consider whether the servant leadership model is good across public sectors at different levels-federal, state and local agencies.

Conclusion

Public Service Department situated in Putrajaya, one of the government agencies, is a central agency which is responsible to manage human resource development for the civil servants in Malaysia. The current study attempted to find a relationship between servant leadership and organizational commitment constructs and build on the emerging evidence that shows how servant leadership attributes possessed by leaders could influence and bring commitment into their staff. This study examined the issue from the management and professional staff levels. The findings of the study are aligned with the mission of the Department to be a role model to all other government agencies. This

huge Department absolutely needs the capability and commitment of the leaders toward the accomplishment of some common objectives of the organization.

According to the findings of this study servant-leadership practice has been demonstrated by most of the leaders in each unit and division of the Department. Most of the leaders are committed to the growth of both the individual and the organization in conformity with servant leaders characteristic attributes. Leaders have demonstrated a lifelong endeavour to build community within the organization and demonstrated a steward of holding the organization in trust to the public they serve. They have remained intimately attuned to the needs and situations of the staff in the organization. The findings also reflect the sincerity of the leaders to empowering others to succeed professionally and personally thereby leading to moderate commitment of the staff to the Department. However, the government should strengthen and encourage this practice through effective training of the leaders especially the young officers to develop a useful quality of servant leader that can help such a diverse staff with different cultural and ethnic backgrounds realize their best potential as civil servants.

Good governance initiative towards successful formulation and implementation of public policies is linked to three important relationships: leadership–people, people-leaders and people-people. More emphases should be on the link between the concepts of leadership-partnership in organization which will encourage the civil servants to take the lead in ensuring that good leadership becomes a practice in Malaysia. In government service sector, the practicing of servant leadership style whereby the leader in one organization devote themselves to lead with various attributes that characterized servant leaders in serving the needs of organizations' members accordingly and focusing on meeting the needs of those they lead will benefit the organization. It will ensure commitment and trust in leaders and followers of the organizations. The lack of servant leadership will lead to demotivation and raise the dissatisfaction among staff, increasing staff's turnover and decreasing the staff's quality of works.

Finally, various implications and recommendations addressed in the study deserve an urgent attention of the government for optimum growth and success of all public organizations in the country at large. Leadership requires the development of key important characters that a leader must have in his/her blood. The challenges of leadership and the development of an effective leader however, are neither easy nor well understood. Based on the challenges being faced by the public led-organizations, there is a crucial need for new forms of leadership to be evolved towards effective policy implementation. Ideally the outcome of servant leadership if really practiced in its totality is the production of additional servants that are ready to serve the organization and help realize its policy efforts of serving the public better. Generally, it has gradually become evident in other studies that the associated characteristics, attributes, practices, and outcomes of servant leadership behavior have several ramifications for not only organizations but also the leaders and followers in implementing policy more effectively. *In the final analysis, a servant leader is not the person with the most responsibilities or the most senior whether in the federal, state and local agency, but the person worth to be emulated; not the person who promotes his or her vested interest [in the organization], but a promoter of his or her fellow people* (See: Winston, 2002, 2003 and 2004).

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